

BEWARE • LUKE 12:1-21

The backdrop to this section is Jesus' confrontation with the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. As He approaches His death in Jerusalem Jesus is concerned that His disciples may fall prey to the same type of hypocrisy. Therefore He urgently warns them to "be on their guard" against two potential traps that have ensnared the Pharisees, and could easily ensnare them.

Be on your guard

Read 12:1-12

1. What is hypocrisy? Why does Jesus say that it is ultimately futile?
2. When will God disclose the secrets of our hearts?
3. The Scripture refers to trials as "mini-judgement days" (1 Peter 4:17-19) that God graciously provides for believers, to expose their hidden areas of underdevelopment and sin. Why would God do this?
4. Describe a time that the stress of a trial "proclaimed from the roof tops" a hidden area of your weakness and sin?
5. Read 12: 4-7 and 11-12. What form of hypocrisy is Jesus concerned about here?
6. What causes us to be hypocritical in this area?
7. What does Jesus teach to counterbalance these pressures? How should this make a difference in our witness for Christ?

8. Read 12:8-10. Jesus mentions here one form of hypocrisy which the Pharisees were guilty of that can never be forgiven. What is it? Why can't it be forgiven?

Be on your guard

Read 12:13-21

Jesus warns about greed of all different kinds, meaning we are often unaware of the many different ways we are wealthy. Notice Jesus refers to the man as wealthy before he even has this abundant crop.

9. Compared to the rest of the world how would you assess your wealth in the following areas. (Write either "rich" or "poor".)

Education

Money

Possessions

Health

Time

Vocation (financial freedom that enables you to choose any career)

Freedom (to speak, travel etc.)

10. In what ways was this rich man foolish concerning his wealth?

11. In what ways have you given from the wealth that you possess? Do you think this is sufficient?

12. Do you see yourself as truly free to serve Jesus in whatever way He would ask, or do you feel obligations or ensnarements to pursue careers, additional studies, financial security, or even a family? In which of these areas do you feel a sense of obligation?

13. What lesson can you learn from the rich man and Jesus' warning to "be on your guard?"

Memory verses

Luke 12:1 "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."

Luke 12:15 "Be on your guard against all kinds of greed."